



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

BROOKLYN MAN PLEADS GUILTY IN MIDDLE EAST ARMS TRAFFICKING CASE

-- Components for U.S. Missiles, Fighter Jets, and Radars Illegally Exported to Middle East --

BRIDGEPORT, CT. -- Kevin J. O'Connor, U.S. Attorney for the District of Connecticut, and Robin Avers, Special Agent-in-Charge U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) New England, today announced that Leib Kohn, age 66, of 5814 14th Avenue, Brooklyn, New York, pleaded guilty today to conspiracy to violate the Arms Export Control Act by sending military components out of the United States without the required authorization from the U.S. Government. Kohn's companies, L & M Manufacturing and Nesco NY INC., also pleaded guilty to the same charge.

According to documents filed with the Court and to statements made in court, Kohn was arrested on March 19, 2004 by Special Agents of the Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement on a Criminal Complaint issued by the U.S. District Court in Bridgeport, Connecticut. At that time, a search warrant was executed at Kohn's Brooklyn residence.

Two days earlier, the Israeli authorities, working in conjunction with U.S. authorities, conducted a search at the business premises of Q.P.S in Binyamina, Israel and there located certain of the items that KOHN had purchased from U.S. manufacturers and shipped to Israel.

On April 15, 2004, a federal grand jury sitting in Bridgeport returned a two-count Indictment against Kohn, L & M Manufacturing and Nesco NY INC. The Indictment alleges that, since May 2003, Kohn has continuously procured various munitions items from U.S. manufacturers, including one based in Connecticut, and shipped them to Israel without seeking permission of the U.S. Government for the export. These items are controlled by the U.S. State Department and require licenses and approvals from the U.S. State Department prior to export.

According to the Indictment, some of the items KOHN procured and exported are: Parts designed for use in military radar, parts for the F-4 Phantom jet fighter aircraft, and parts for the Hawk guidance missile systems. In particular, the Indictment alleges that KOHN procured wiring harnesses for guidance radar of the Hawk Missile System from a Connecticut company, a fire control radar system for the F-4 Phantom fighter jet aircraft, an audio frequency amplifier for the F-5

jet fighter aircraft from RDB Aeromax in Chatsworth, California, and engine parts for the F-4 Phantom jet fighter aircraft from Unique Aeronautics of Sun Valley, California. In each instance, Kohn was advised through documentation that export of these items was prohibited absent a valid export license from the U.S. Department of State.

"The federal government will vigorously prosecute illegal exports of arms and munitions components and technology from the United States," U.S. Attorney O'Connor stated. "We live in a state that is the home to many defense contractors, large and small. Private industry is the first line of defense when it comes to stopping illegal exports, and this case may not have been made were it not for the assistance of one of those contractors. We sincerely appreciate their assistance."

U.S. Attorney O'Connor noted that the investigation is ongoing.

"This case is especially alarming because of the sensitivity of the U.S. military items being exported to the Middle East," added Robin Avers, Special Agent in Charge, ICE-New England. "We owe a special debt of gratitude to the Israeli authorities who played a critical role in this investigation. This case should serve as a model for future joint investigations between U.S. and Israeli authorities."

When he is sentenced by Judge Droney on March 4, 2005, Kohn faces a maximum term of imprisonment of ten years, a fine of up to \$1,000,000 and possible debarment of export privileges. Each of Kohn's companies face a fine of up to \$1,000,000. As a condition of his guilty plea, Kohn has agreed to pay a fine in the amount of \$25,000.

Special Agents of U.S. Department Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement are conducting the ongoing investigation, in cooperation with the Israeli National Police. Assistant United States Attorney Robert M. Appleton is prosecuting the case.

#ICE#

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.